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ABSTRACT

This 3- to 5-day currriculum unit for secondary students centers around four possible directions for U.S. foreign policy during the 1990s. Designed as a culminating exercise at the end of the year or as an introductory activity to open the semester, this unit, and the possible futures it presents, should be thought of as a vehicle for guiding students through the process involved in developing a reasoned opinion for U.S. foreign policy. By first exploring four clearly defined alternatives and the beliefs underlying them, it is hoped that students will be able to organize their own values and ideas. The four futures act to flesh out four fundamentally different ways of looking at the world, so that students can weigh the merits of each world view. In Future One, the United States has a "good vs. evil" view of world affairs and believe it has the right and responsibility to act unilaterally to try to help spread democracy and respect for human rights. In Future Two, the United States has a conventional "balance of power" view and does not feel any fundamental change is needed in existing policies. In Future Three, the United States has a "globalist" view and believes that all nations must address international problems not on their own, but cooperatively. In Future Four, the United States has an "economic" view and believes that economic strength, not military strength is the key to security and prosperity. (DB)

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THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES IN A CHANGING WORLD

A Curriculum Unit on Foreign Policy Choices

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A SERIES ON THE UNITED STATES' CHOICES IN A CHANGING WORLD

Choices for the 21st Century Education Project
Center for Foreign Policy Development at Brown University

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The Role of the United States in a Changing World is a project of the Choices for the 21st Century Education Project of the Center for Foreign Policy Development at Brown University in cooperation with the Study Circles Resource Center.

Center for Foreign Policy Development at Brown University: The Center for Foreign Policy Development is a non-profit research organization. Its mandate is to bring together scholars, practitioners, politicians and the public in a search for policy choices that can lead to consensus on American national security and foreign policy.

Choices for the 21st Century Education Project: This project was established at the Center for Foreign Policy Development to help citizens (student or adult) think constructively about foreign policy issues, increase public interest in foreign policy issues, improve participatory citizenship skills, and encourage public judgment on policy priorities. At the core of the project's efforts has been the concept of choices as a framework for student analysis and discussion. All of its curriculum materials share this common pedagogy.

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Four Futures: A Framework for Discussion

Today, the United States finds itself in a world that has fundamentally changed. Our long and intense Cold War rivalry with the Soviet Union appears to be ending. The success of the U.N.-backed anti-Iraq coalition suggests that international organizations may play a much larger peace-keeping role in the future. The swift defeat of Iraq's forces at the hands of the U.S.-led coalition forces demonstrates our country's enormous military strength. The popular feeling that the United States has "kicked the Vietnam habit" suggests that Americans are now more self-confident and assertive in world affairs than they have been in decades. At the same time, however, human rights abuses, poverty, pollution, and civil war plague many people across the globe. At home, we are experiencing the worst recession in years, a serious national budget crisis, and other pressing domestic problems.

We have lost the ideological compass that the Cold War provided to help us determine how we should deal with the countries of the world. To replace it, some politicians now talk vaguely of a "new world order," while others see the United States as a "global policeman," and still others want our attention focused on problems at home. As a new era in world history begins, we are uncertain where to head.

To gain a sense of our new role in this changed world, we must look deeply into the shared values that bind us together and define us as Americans. We must reconsider who we are as a nation.

This is not a simple project. In the past 100 years, Americans have often disagreed about the main problems that faced our nation, and the proper response. From Baghdad to Bucharest, from the Berlin Wall to Tiananmen Square, we have, over time, drawn different and sometimes conflicting lessons from our experiences in the world.

In order to bring this subject into clearer focus, the Choices for the 21st Century Education Project and the Study Circles Resource Center, drawing on the Center for Foreign Policy Development's work on global issues, have produced the following framework of four alternative images of the United States in the year 2001. In each of these Futures, Americans have reached very different conclusions about the nature of global affairs, the threats facing our country, and the role the United States should play in the world.

As you read through the Futures, bear in mind that they are not predictions for the year 2001. Nor are they the only possible set of goals the United States can work toward. Rather, they were designed to raise fundamental issues concerning our country's future, issues that form the basis of our national debate. Together the four Futures show a broad range of possible directions in which the United States could head over the next ten years.

As you consider these Futures, try them on. You will find that each has its own risks and tradeoffs, advantages and disadvantages. As you read, think about whether each Future addresses your own concerns. You may discover that you like more than one of these Futures, or none at all. You may want to develop your own Future, a Future Five, that addresses what *you* think are the most important issues facing our nation today. By clarifying your views in discussion with your classmates, family, and fellow citizens, you will be doing your part in helping our country decide its course in the years ahead.

THE FUTURES AT A GLANCE

FUTURE ONE: Standing Up for Democracy

It is the year 2001. In the past ten years, Americans came to realize that as the home of freedom and democracy, the United States has a special role to play in the world. Over the past ten years, the United States followed a principled foreign policy. We militarily, economically, and politically supported the governments of the world that had both a good human rights record and the support of their people, and we opposed those that didn't. We especially supported the poor nations around the world that were taking their first steps toward democracy. At times, we may have had to use military force to stop tyrannical governments from killing their own people. Now that these tyrants know that we mean business, they are causing much less trouble. In 2001, the era of the dictator is ending, and the world is becoming a safer and more humane place for all peoples.

FUTURE TWO: Charting a Stable Course

It is the year 2001. In the past ten years, Americans came to understand that as the world's superpower, the United States is looked upon by the nations of the world as an important source of stability and security. Over the past ten years, the United States carefully maintained strong political, economic, and military alliances that have made our competitive world a more stable place. This has helped prevent aggressive countries from threatening peace-loving nations and the international economy. As a result, we remain the world's superpower, and we are richer from doing business with our many allies. We sometimes had to support stable but undemocratic governments, and may even have sent some of our troops to fight again, but this was a small price to pay for keeping the aggressive governments of the world in check. In 2001, we are making the United States more powerful and the world more secure.

FUTURE THREE: Cooperating Globally

It is the year 2001. In the past ten years, Americans came to understand that they live in an interdependent and interconnected world. Over the past ten years, the United States addressed problems around the world not on its own but in cooperation with many other nations. Instead of trying to police the world ourselves, we do not use military force outside of North America unless most of our close allies and other leading nations support us in advance. We granted more responsibility to international organizations to keep the peace. And since wars around the world have shown us that the major cause of conflict is poverty, we are now spending much more money to help the poor countries of the world get on their feet. This has been hard work, but it will make us all more secure and prosperous in the long run. In 2001, we are working together to address the common threats that concern us all.

FUTURE FOUR: Building Our Economic Strength

It is the year 2001. In the past ten years, Americans came to realize that having the world's strongest economy is far more important than having our troops spread across the world. Over the past ten years, the United States gradually brought its troops home and cut its military spending by about three-quarters. We used the hundreds of billions of dollars saved to strengthen our economy, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and address other pressing national problems. We are still capable of defending North America, and we maintain a small force to strike quickly when Americans abroad are seriously threatened, but we are no longer a military giant. Today, our economic strength is our best weapon. In 2001, the United States is rapidly growing stronger.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

The sequence of lessons in this mini-unit is designed to lead students to seriously consider our country's role in the world. For most secondary students, this unit will represent their first encounter with the future of U.S. foreign policy. Many of the concepts will be new and the terms unfamiliar. As U.S. leaders have long known, this is a subject of great breadth and complexity, where thoughtful discussion does not come easily.

The Futures presented in this mini-unit should be thought of as a vehicle for guiding students through the process involved in developing a reasoned opinion on U.S. foreign policy. By first exploring four clearly defined alternatives and the beliefs underlying them, students will be better able to organize their own values and ideas. In the course of the mini-unit, students will begin by thinking about our country's changing role in the world, then ponder the four Futures as possible directions for U.S. foreign policy, and ultimately craft a fifth Future. This order ensures that students will acquire the tools for reflecting on U.S. foreign policy before articulating their own beliefs.

As a culminating exercise at the end of the school year or as an introductory activity to open the semester, *The Role of the United States in a Changing World* aims to broaden student thinking. The four Futures act to flesh out four fundamentally different ways of looking at the world, so that students can better weigh the merits of each world view. In Future One, Americans have a "good vs. evil" view of world affairs, and believe they have the right and responsibility to act unilaterally to try to help spread democracy and respect for human rights. In Future Two, Americans have a conventional "balance of power" view, and do not feel any fundamental change is needed in our policies. In Future Three, Americans have a "globalist" view, and believe that all nations must address international problems not on their own, but cooperatively. In Future Four, Americans have an "economic" view, and believe that economic strength, not military strength, is the key to U.S. security and prosperity.

Below is an outline of a five-day lesson plan based on the Futures. (Note the Alternative Three-Day Lesson Plan at the end of this section.)

Day 1

1. Thinking about the role of the United States in the world (10-15 minutes)

2. Linking Beliefs with Futures (25-30 minutes)

Homework: *Glossary* and *Glossary Worksheet*

Days 2-3

1. Simulation: the Futures before the U.S. Senate (Two 45-minute class periods)

Day 2 Homework: preparation for presentations

Day 3 Homework: *Evaluation Form: U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Members*

Day 4

1. Discussing the Futures (One 45-minute class period)

Homework: *Focusing Your Thoughts* worksheet

Day 5

1. Crafting a Future Five (One 45-minute class period)

Homework: *My Future Five* worksheet

FIVE-DAY LESSON PLAN

DAY ONE

Thinking about the role of the United States in the world (10-15 minutes)

Objective: This introductory brainstorming activity will encourage students to consider the impact of recent developments and important events in American history on our country's role in the world.

Procedure:

1. Ask students to identify the most important developments in world affairs in the past three or four years. Record the responses on the chalkboard. (The list should include the Persian Gulf war, the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the revolutions in Eastern Europe, the crackdown against the student movement in China, turmoil in the Soviet Union, and financial crises in the United States.) Ask students how these events have affected the role of the United States in the world. Compare, for example, the impact of the Persian Gulf war with that of the fall of the Berlin Wall on international relations.

2. Ask students to consider the U.S. role in the world during different periods of American history. For example, what was our country's role after the Mexican-American War? In the 1920s? After World War II? How has our country's role changed under different presidents, such as Wilson, Coolidge, Carter, or Reagan? After students have shared their ideas, point out that the U.S. role in the world has undergone a number of revisions. What circumstances accounted for these changes? Note that we are living at a stage in history when our country's role in the world is again being re-evaluated.

Linking beliefs with Futures (25-30 minutes)

Objective: This small-group activity will illustrate the link between the policy implications of the four Futures and deep, underlying beliefs about international relations.

Procedure:

1. Give each student copies of *The Four Futures: A Framework for Discussion, The Futures at a Glance* and the *Beliefs Many Americans Hold* worksheet. Organize the class in groups of three to four students. Instruct the students to read the materials. Students should then work as a group to match the Futures with the beliefs. Each group should also select a spokesperson to present the group's answers to the class.

2. When groups have completed matching Futures with beliefs, ask the spokespersons to report their group's answers. After students understand the relationship between the beliefs and the Futures, ask students which beliefs they most strongly support. (In most classes, students will express strong support for a number of beliefs.)

3. Ask students to consider cases in which the four beliefs conflict. For example, what are the policies that would derive from each of the beliefs regarding Lithuania's drive for independence or the struggle of blacks in South Africa? Ask students to consider briefly how each of the four Futures would respond to these issues.

Homework: *Glossary* and *Glossary Worksheet*

DAYS TWO AND THREE

Simulation: The Futures before the U.S. Senate (Two 45-minute class periods)

Objective: This simulation calls on students to advocate, analyze, and critique each of the four Futures. Students will deepen their understanding of the U.S. role in the world and strengthen their communication skills.

Procedure:

Day 2

1. Create four groups of four students. Inform these groups that each will advocate one of the Futures on the U.S. role in the world. The remainder of the class will serve as members of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Distribute the four Futures to every student. Assign each of the four-person groups a Future and distribute the *Future Groups* worksheet. Committee members should receive the *Background Information* and *Evaluation Form* worksheets. Each of the Future groups should select a spokesperson, a cross-examiner, an expert on military affairs, and an expert on economic affairs. Students will be given the remainder of the period to prepare their presentations or, in the case of the committee members, prepare questions for the Future groups.

2. Make sure that members of the Future groups understand their roles. The spokesperson will be expected to present the position of the Future group to the committee members. The cross-examiner will challenge the positions of the other Future groups. The two experts will apply their respective areas of expertise to preparing the presentation of the spokesperson and providing ideas for challenging cross-examination questions. Future groups will probably need to complete their preparations as homework.

Day 3

1. Organize the room so that four clusters of four desks face a row of seats reserved for Foreign Relations Committee members. Explain that the exercise will begin with the presentations of the spokespersons of the four Future groups. These presentations should not exceed five minutes. When the presentations have been completed, each of the Future groups, beginning with Future One, will receive cross-examination questions. The cross-examiners will be given the first opportunity to pose questions. Following this exchange, committee members will ask questions. Any member of the Future group under cross-examination may respond on behalf of the group. No cross-examiner or committee member should be allowed to dominate the discussion with a long string of questions.

2. After all four Futures have been presented and debated, inform the Foreign Relations Committee members that they will be called upon to explain the reasoning behind their assessment of the presentations the following day. In the meantime, they should complete the *Evaluation Form* worksheet as homework.

DAY FOUR

Discussing the Futures (One 45-minute class period)

Objective: In this discussion, students will articulate their own opinions about the Futures and apply them to the present international situation. This activity will allow students to consider the broader implications of each Future.

Procedure:

1. Call on individual members of the Foreign Relations Committee to explain their evaluations of the presentations. Which arguments were most persuasive? Which groups made the best use of historical evidence? Of recent events? Focus discussion on the quality of the presentations rather than on preferences regarding the Futures. This exchange should require about ten minutes and should serve as an introduction to the arguments surrounding each Future.

2. Ask students to summarize what they find most and least appealing about each of the Futures. Make sure that students understand the tradeoffs involved in each Future. Fill in the gaps left from the simulation by leading students to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each Future. Encourage students to keep their minds open to novel viewpoints before developing their own Futures.

To deepen the discussion of the Futures, ask students to respond to a current event through the perspective of the Futures. Emphasize the need to connect each of the Futures to policy dilemmas in the real world. For example, the struggle of the Kurds in Iraq to gain autonomy became a critical issue in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf war. Ask students to formulate a policy position on this problem according to each of the Futures. Students should focus on the risks and tradeoffs that accompany the position taken by each Future.

Homework: *Focusing Your Thoughts* worksheet

DAY FIVE

Crafting a Future Five (One 45-minute class period)

Objective: In this exercise, students will channel their understanding of the U.S. role in the world toward articulating a Future based on their own beliefs and opinions. Student Futures can be one of the four Futures presented, a variation of one or more of these, or something new.

Procedure:

1. On the chalkboard, list the Futures above four columns. Poll students as to their preferences. Read through the list of beliefs, asking students for their reaction to each belief. Remind students of the relationship between holding a belief and supporting a Future.

2. Distribute *Crafting a Future Five* and the *My Future Five* worksheet. Explain that the process of crafting a fifth Future follows a logical sequence: 1) Identifying core beliefs about the United States and its role in the world; 2) Deriving concrete policy statements from the core beliefs; 3) Roughly assessing the economic implications of the policies; and 4) Recognizing arguments both for and against the Future. Students may work alone or may help each other in pairs on their individual Future. The assignment may also be completed as homework or as a longer essay.

Extra Challenge: After students complete the *My Future Five* worksheet, require that they write brief rebuttals to the cons they identified. If time permits, read a diverse selection of the Futures and try to develop a class consensus. Such a project might be culminated by writing a letter to a local congressperson or newspaper editor expressing the views of the entire class.

ALTERNATIVE THREE-DAY LESSON PLAN

DAY ONE: After "Thinking about the role of the United States in the world," the Day One activity in the Five-Day Lesson Plan, divide students into groups of four. Assign each group member one of the four Futures. Instruct students to develop a policy according to their respective Future on a current event. For example, how should the United States respond to the struggle of the Kurds in Iraq for autonomy? After all four group members have developed policies for their respective Futures, they should compare responses. As a group, they should write arguments for and against each Future, on the basis of how well it dealt with the current event. Distribute the *Glossary* and *Glossary Worksheet* as homework.

DAY TWO: Ask students to share the policies they developed on the current event. List the proposals under their respective Future on the chalkboard. Ask students to evaluate the risks and tradeoffs associated with each Future. Moving beyond the current event, ask students to comment on what they find most appealing and least appealing about each of the Futures. What historical lessons can be applied in evaluating the Futures? What can we learn from recent events? Ask students to imagine they were advising the President on the future direction of U.S. foreign policy. How would they assess each of the Futures? Distribute the *Focusing Your Thoughts*worksheet as homework.

DAY THREE: See Day Five of the Five-Day Lesson Plan.

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

After your class completes its work with the Futures, you may consider further employing the varying perspectives presented by the Futures to enter into follow-up discussions on the nature of the United States, Americans, and world affairs. These may also be assigned as essay topics. Students should know that these are not easy questions, and they have no "right" answers. Below are some suggested topics:

What are our most important values? Our belief in freedom, justice and democracy? Our pragmatism? Our visionary idealism and belief in equality? Our self-reliance and competitiveness?

Are Americans special? What makes the United States unique? Do the United States' special qualities give it a right or responsibility to pressure other countries to behave in a certain way? Are we entitled to any special privileges because of our enormous economic and military power?

How well can we tell right from wrong? Do we have the right to take action in the world when we believe another country is doing something that is wrong, even when other countries do not agree with us? When, if at all, should we refrain from acting unless other countries support us? Has the United States ever acted wrongly?

Must our means be as good as our ends in making the world a better place? Can we make the world a better place by sometimes allying with dictators? Consider the history of our involvement in Latin America, and our alliances in World War II, the Vietnam War, and the Gulf War.

Where is our country headed in the next century? What new problems might Americans have to face in the next century? Will our role in the world be different?

How does the world work? Do we live in a world of good and evil, in which we must fight injustice whenever we see it? Do we live in a world of power, in which we must constantly try both to remain powerful to balance other competing powers against each other? Is the world fundamentally interdependent, so that we all must sink or swim together? Or does money make the world go around, and is military strength becoming obsolete in the nuclear age?

Where is the world headed in the next century? Will democratic ideals take hold of the whole world? Will war become obsolete? Will increasing interdependence dissolve the nation-state and lead to world or community government? Will the way we think about the world fundamentally change? Or will things remain basically the same?

How does one define "peace among nations"? Is it when all governments respect the will of their people and international law? Is it when all countries have stable governments and no country feels gravely threatened by another? Is it when countries no longer compete with one another? Is it when nations reach an understanding that wars are not worth fighting?

What is "human nature"? Do all people around the world want the same freedoms and democratic system that we have? Are humans naturally competitive or cooperative? Is there a "dark side" to human nature? What drives people to support dictators or fight wars?

FUTURE ONE: Standing Up for Democracy

It is the year 2001. In the past ten years, Americans came to realize that as the home of freedom and democracy, the United States has a special role to play in the world. The end of the Cold War, followed by the U.S. victory in the Gulf War, left it clear that the United States had the most powerful military on earth. We sadly realized, however, that although we had liberated Kuwait, Iraq and other countries remained in the hands of cruel and undemocratic leaders who terrorized their own people. We knew that we had to struggle until the world's bullies were stopped and all governments respected human rights and the will of their own people. Knowing that the oppressed people of the world were counting on us, we decided to act boldly.

Over the past ten years, we followed a principled foreign policy. We militarily, economically, and politically supported the governments of the world that had both a good human rights record and the support of their people, and opposed those that didn't. We especially supported the nations around the world that were taking their first steps toward democracy. At times, we may have had to use military force to stop tyrannical governments of this world from killing their own people. Now that these tyrants know that we mean business, they are causing much less trouble. In 2001, the world is becoming a safer and more humane place for all peoples. The era of the dictator is ending.

What do we have to do?

- We will support only governments that treat all their citizens properly and that are democratically elected—or at least that clearly have the support of their people. We will make it clear to known trouble-makers, such as Iraq, Iran, Syria, North Korea, and Cuba, that the United States will no longer tolerate their cruel and aggressive ways. We will pressure China to allow its own citizens more freedom and to liberate Tibet. We will pressure the Soviet Union to release control of its independence-seeking republics, and to become more tolerant and democratic. We will pressure Great Britain, Israel, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, Turkey, Indonesia, and other long-time allies to improve their human rights record as well. We will encourage all countries to join us in this approach.

- *Militarily,* we will break our alliances with undemocratic governments or those with poor human rights records. This may mean moving our military bases from countries like Saudi Arabia or Turkey. We will stop giving or selling arms to such governments, and instead, we will supply arms only to our democratic allies that are threatened by hostile governments. We may use military force, if necessary, to prevent other countries from building nuclear, biological or chemical weapons, from supporting terrorism, or from killing their own people. We will keep our troops deployed around the world, and will use them to prevent aggressive countries from taking over their weaker democratic neighbors, though we will not use our forces to stop all conflicts (such as small border disputes) between nations.

- *Economically,* we will use boycotts and sanctions against countries that support terrorism, have poor human rights records, or that try to acquire dangerous weapons. We will consider arming and aiding rebel groups trying to make their land more free and democratic. We will give economic aid to the poor nations of Eastern Europe and the developing world that are democracies and that respect human rights. We will use the promise of better economic trade and aid to encourage more countries around the world to give democracy a chance, and to respect human rights.

Costs

This Future may be expensive. We may have to raise taxes, cut domestic spending, or borrow money from other countries to fund these military and economic policies. We may lose some important trading partners among undemocratic developing nations, such as Saudi Arabia and China, should we decide to stop selling them weapons or buying their products. If Western Europe and Japan join us, our costs will be reduced. In the long run, as the most dangerous governments fall from power and are replaced by humane and peace-loving ones, we may gradually reduce our military spending.

Future 1 is based on these beliefs:

- The United States is respected throughout the world as the leader of freedom, justice, and democracy. As Americans, we have a special responsibility to promote democracy and respect for human rights around the world.

- We must oppose tyrannical governments everywhere. They are the main human cause of suffering in the world. Left unopposed, these governments oppress their people and may even start dangerous wars. To support them or turn a blind eye to their atrocities is dangerous and immoral. We must stop them now.

- We have the most powerful military in history and should not be afraid to use it to make the world a better place. As long as we remain militarily on our guard, we may expect fewer and fewer problems from the world's trouble-makers, and we may take bolder steps than ever before to promote democracy and respect for human rights.

Critics say:

- The governments of the world may oppose the United States for taking this approach. They will say that we have no right to pressure other governments to act in a way that we consider just. Many will think that the United States is trying to take control of other countries.

- In this Future, we risk losing some of our most valuable allies, such as Saudi Arabia. We also run the risk that the Soviet Union or China may oppose us. By encouraging "good" governments to oppose "bad" ones, we may cause the world to split into two opposing sides, as in the Cold War. All of this may make the world dangerously unstable for the United States.

- By harming our relations with undemocratic governments upon whose oil or other materials we depend, we may seriously damage our economy. We may refuse to trade with certain countries on moral grounds, but if other countries still do business with them, keeping them economically healthy, only we will suffer for it.

- Some societies in developing countries may not desire democracy and more freedom. For example, we may want Islamic governments in the Middle East to give their citizens the same freedoms that we have, but most of their citizens believe in their traditional way of life and may not want their society to have such freedoms.

Supporters say:

- As we rid the world of oppressive governments, this plan may require us to send some of our troops into battle again. But since democracies are much less likely to start wars than dictatorships, we will actually be making the world a more peaceful place in the long run.

- Most people around the world will support the United States in this Future. The liberation of Eastern Europe shows that freedom and respect for other fundamental human rights are universal values, opposed only by tyrants. If the citizens of countries whose governments we oppose do not openly support us, it is only because they are afraid of what their government may do to them.

- Stopping the world's bullies may be expensive, but if we wait until they become so powerful that we must confront them, as we dealt with Hitler in World War II, the cost may be enormous.

- After we help the oppressed peoples around the world throw out their corrupt leaders, the grateful new governments will want to improve economic ties with the United States. And as these new democracies take root and their economies grow strong, their citizens will have more money to purchase our products.

FUTURE TWO: Charting a Stable Course

It is the year 2001. In the past ten years, Americans came to understand that as the world's superpower, the United States is looked upon by the nations of the world as an important source of stability and security. As we entered the 1990s, we saw that the world had grown dangerously unstable. It was only a matter of time before Iraq, a poor nation with an enormous army, invaded its oil-rich but militarily weak neighbor Kuwait, and appeared ready to strike at Saudi Arabia. With Iraq threatening the world's oil supplies and the international economy, we had no choice but to use our troops to protect our economic interests and the stability of the world. After the war, we realized that conflicts such as this would never have happened had we better used our influence as a superpower to make regions such as the Middle East more balanced and stable. Knowing that we had to do something to keep other Saddam Husseins in check and to make sure nothing else upset the military balance or threatened the world economy, we took action.

Over the past ten years, the United States carefully maintained strong political, economic, and military alliances that have made our competitive world a more stable place. As a result, we remain the world's superpower, and we are richer from doing business with our many allies. We sometimes had to support stable but undemocratic governments, and may even have sent some of our troops to fight again, but this was a small price to pay for making the United States more powerful and the world more secure.

What do we have to do?

- We will continue to ally ourselves with Western Europe and Japan. We will strengthen our valuable alliances with stable developing countries, even though many, such as Saudi Arabia, are undemocratic. We will consider becoming allies with less stable but influential countries in troubled areas of the world, such as Syria in the Middle East. Our influence may make the regions more stable by making these countries feel better protected, or by pressuring them not to start wars, support terrorism, or build nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons of their own.

- *Militarily,* we will promise to defend militarily weak countries, like Kuwait, which we and other industrial nations depend on for oil and a variety of important materials. We will encourage arms control agreements and peace settlements to reduce the threat of a major war in the Middle East and in other troubled areas. If the countries involved can't reach an agreement, we will give or sell arms to our allies to keep aggressive, anti-American nations such as Iraq, Iran, or Cuba, in check. We will be prepared, if necessary, to use our own troops to prevent such countries from making the world more unstable. As a result, our military will have to remain deployed around the world.

- *Economically,* we will do more business with the Soviet Union and China and not pressure them to reform their governments as long as they agree not to cause trouble outside their borders or oppose our policies. We will increase our trade with and give more aid to stable governments in Eastern Europe and the developing world that welcome U.S. businesses, even if those governments are undemocratic or have poor human rights records. We will arm and aid rebel groups trying to overthrow their government or declare their homeland's independence from another country if we think it likely that the revolution will make the whole region more stable and that the new government will be pro-American.

Costs

We will have to maintain the world's strongest military in order to remain the world's superpower, so we may need to keep our defense spending high. If the nations of the world agree to reduce their numbers of weapons and troops, we may spend less.

Future 2 is based on these beliefs:

- The United States and the whole world benefit from stability. As the crisis in the Persian Gulf showed, instability encourages aggressive nations to act up, threatens the world economy, and can plunge the world into war. Any attempt to fundamentally "change the world" will actually make the world dangerously unstable and worse off.

- Other nations depend on the United States, the world's strongest military power and one of the oldest functioning democracies, to be a source of stability and security in a rough and competitive world. More than any other country, we can maintain alliances that will keep power-hungry nations in check and make unstable countries or regions more stable.

- We must be practical, and continue to be friendly with stable but undemocratic governments, such as Saudi Arabia and China, in order to make the world more secure. In the long run, our ideals will take root in these countries, as they eventually did in Eastern Europe.

Critics say:

- We have tried such policies in the past and they can fail. If we and other nations hadn't armed Iraq in the 1980s to keep its neighbor, Iran, in check, we wouldn't have had to fight the Gulf War later to keep Iraq in check. As World War I showed, even the most carefully arranged balances of power can eventually collapse.

- Arranging alliances around the world was important back when we were fighting communism. But today there are no countries that seriously threaten the United States. There is no longer a need to do this.

- Keeping our alliances with undemocratic governments and cruel dictators is immoral, and preserves the unacceptable current situation. It sets back the cause of human rights and the worldwide movement toward democracy.

- Many people around the world will resent the United States for trying to remain the world's superpower. They will say that now that the Cold War is over, there is no reason for a country with only 5% of the world's population to remain so powerful.

Supporters say:

- These policies will keep the United States economically powerful. By maintaining trade ties with all our stable allies among the nations of the developing world, we will secure continued access to the oil, metals, lumber, foods, and other materials that we require for our manufacturing and high living standard. In addition, doing more business with the Soviet Union and China will open up massive new markets for our products.

- The best way to improve the quality of life for all the people of the world is through stability. Opposing the world's many undemocratic governments may sound moral, but it may make the world dangerously unstable and result in more wars, destruction, and human suffering than if we do nothing.

- This Future accepts the world as it is. We may want to promote our democratic ideals, but most governments of the world are too self-interested to accept any kind of "new world order." The best compromise we can make is to work out alliances that make the United States prosperous and the world more secure.

- Managing alliances against the spread of communism helped make the United States a superpower during the Cold War. Managing a set of alliances to make the world more stable will help keep us on top.

FUTURE THREE: Cooperating Globally

It is the year 2001. In the past ten years, Americans came to understand that they live in an interdependent and interconnected world. A crisis in the Persian Gulf can lead to economic problems for the United States. Our economic problems can lead to economic problems in Brazil. Economic problems in Brazil can lead to more destruction of its tropical rain forests as poor farmers clear more land for crops, which in turn creates environmental problems for the whole world. We realized that the only way to solve the many problems facing our world was for all nations to cooperate.

Over the past ten years, we addressed problems around the world not on our own but in cooperation with many other nations. Instead of trying to police the world ourselves, we do not use military force outside of North America unless most of our close allies and other leading nations support us in advance. We granted more responsibility to the United Nations and other international organizations to keep the peace. As wars around the world have often shown us, the major cause of conflict is poverty, so we are now spending much more money to help the poor countries of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and the developing world get on their feet. This has been hard work, but improving economic conditions in these nations will make us all more secure and prosperous in the end. In 2001, we are finally working together to address the common threats that concern us all.

What do we have to do?

- We will consult with other nations as we determine what our foreign policy should be. Whenever possible we will act not on our own but as part of a coordinated international effort, with the goal to make the world more secure and prosperous. We will support international boycotts and embargoes against countries that break international law, try to acquire nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons, or that refuse to respect the rights of other nations.

- *Militarily,* we will not send our troops to fight outside of North America unless the fifteen-nation United Nations Security Council decides that we should. (As permanent members on the Council, the United States, Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union and China must all approve.) We will work to establish a permanent U.N. military force ready to support the decisions of the Council with force whenever we and enough other Council nations feel this is necessary. No more than 20% of this international force will be composed of U.S. troops. At the same time, we will gradually reduce our number of troops around the world, with the goal of eventually having no independent U.S. forces outside of North America. We will help send specially trained international troops to troubled areas, such as South Africa and Lebanon, to keep the peace and encourage negotiations. We will not give or sell arms to foreign countries or rebel groups without the U.N. Security Council's approval, and will encourage all nations to agree to reduce their weapons and to resolve their conflicts peacefully.

- *Economically,* we will lead a major international cooperative effort to find ways to improve the terrible economic and environmental situation in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and the developing world. We will massively increase our support to the World Bank, the U.N. and other organizations working on this problem, giving tens of billions of dollars more each year than the few billion we give today. We will continue to provide direct economic aid to our allies in the developing world, but will not use this aid as a tool to pressure them. To help strengthen the economies of these countries, we will agree to forgive the hundreds of millions of dollars that many of them owe us.

Costs

As the permanent U.N. rapid-deployment force becomes established, we will no longer need to remain the world's military superpower, and may greatly cut back on our military spending. While some of this money could be put to use at home, most of the money saved will be given to arming and funding our share of the U.N. force, and to international organizations trying to improve the economic situation in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and among the nations of the developing world.

Future 3 is based on these beliefs:

- We live in an interdependent world. A threat to one country is a threat to all countries. As a result, international organizations such as the U.N. have a responsibility to help address these threats. Neither the United States nor any other country has the right to decide on its own to pressure another country to behave in a certain way.

- Poverty and social injustice either aggravate or are the root causes of most conflicts around the world. Addressing these problems is more effective and less costly than sending our troops around the world to intervene when these conflicts flare up.

- Global problems such as war and poverty must be solved collectively. One country cannot decide alone how to solve these problems. The more countries work together, the better the results will be.

Critics say:

- By handing over so much of our power to international organizations, we will lose much of the influence we have over other countries. Without our direct pressure on them, some may even turn on us. Countries will take advantage of our cooperative spirit to make themselves stronger at our expense. While we remain passive, some countries may grow more powerful than us.

- We should not give up our option to use military force outside of North America whenever we choose. The day may come when we want to send our troops to fight but the countries on the Security Council refuse to allow it.

- Corrupt and cruel governments that sacrifice the needs of their people to increase military spending cause much poverty in the world. Strengthening international organizations in which they have a voice, or spending billions to improve the quality of life in these countries will only make such governments stronger, and eventually cause more suffering.

- Before we spend billions trying to solve the world's problems, with no guarantee of success, we should address the many difficult problems we face at home.

Supporters say:

- Giving more power and authority to international organizations does not make us powerless. We are the most influential member in the United Nations and other powerful international organizations, and we will continue to be. Since most nations depend upon us as a major trading partner, they will take our side when our security is threatened.

- The world is becoming more interdependent, not less. Global problems are posing an ever greater challenge to the nations of the world. These policies allow for this trend, and better prepare us for the next century.

- The economic assistance we gave Western Europe and Japan after World War II paid for itself many times over by getting these poverty-stricken countries on their feet so they could take care of themselves again. We must do the same for poverty-stricken countries today, before the already terrible economic and environmental problems there worsen, causing refugees to flood into the United States and Western Europe. The longer we wait, the more costly the solution.

- Cooperating globally is only fair. The earth does not belong to us. Americans comprise only 5% of the world's population, and the United States is but one of more than 165 countries in the world. We have no right to deploy our massive armies or start wars around the world without first seeking international approval.

FUTURE FOUR: Building Our Economic Strength

It is the year 2001. In the past ten years, Americans came to realize that having the world's strongest economy is far more important than having our troops spread across the world. After World War II, the great military strength of the United States helped make it a superpower. But by the time the Cold War ended, the world had changed. While we spent billions of dollars a year defending countries, such as Japan and Germany, that could easily afford to defend themselves, those countries were pulling ahead of us economically and becoming more powerful than we were. We found ourselves so bogged down militarily around the world that we couldn't afford to deal with the biggest threats facing us in the 1990s: our weakening economy and lack of economic competitiveness, the national debt, crime, drugs, AIDS, pollution, and homelessness. We knew that if we did not change with the times, we would become a second-rate nation.

Over the past ten years, we gradually brought our troops home and cut our military spending by about three-quarters. We used the hundreds of billions of dollars saved to strengthen our economy, improve our energy self-sufficiency, and address other pressing national problems. We are still capable of defending North America, and we maintain a small force to strike quickly when Americans abroad are seriously threatened, but we are no longer a military giant. Today, our economic strength is our best weapon. In 2001, the United States is rapidly growing stronger.

What do we have to do?

- We will make building our economic strength our nation's first priority. However, we will not isolate ourselves politically or economically from the rest of world. We will continue to use our influence to pressure the governments of the world to act in ways that will both ensure our security and prosperity and make the world more peaceful and prosperous as well.

- *Militarily,* we will gradually phase out our alliances around the world, except with Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean nations. The United States will make it clear that it will only join other countries militarily when it feels its security is directly threatened. We will redesign our armed forces to defend only the United States, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean, and will maintain a small number of troops ready to respond around the world when American lives are at stake (for example, during a hostage crisis, or to evacuate Americans from a hostile country). These steps will allow the United States to gradually cut its military budget by about three-quarters.

- *Economically,* we will redirect the hundreds of billions of dollars cut from our military budget to strengthen the economy. We may use the money saved to cut taxes, trim our national deficit and debt, invest in education and industry, repair our roads and bridges, and improve technological research in non-military products. We may also spend more money on addressing national problems such as homelessness, drug abuse, crime, pollution, and AIDS, or the problems facing single parents and the elderly. We will push to reduce greatly our dependence on foreign oil. As we scale down our military, we would rely more on foreign aid, boycotts, sanctions, and other non-military pressure as our main tools to make the United States secure. We will improve our trade ties around the world in order to strengthen our economy even more and build our economic influence.

Costs

This Future will allow us to cut our military budget by about three-quarters, which will eventually free up over $200 billion dollars every year. We will redirect this money toward strengthening our economy and better addressing our domestic problems.

Future 4 is based on these beliefs:

- In the post-Cold War era, economic power is far more important than military power. We should spend much more money, then, on strengthening our economy and much less on our military. We must not let Germany, Japan, or any other country gain an economic edge over us. Building an economically strong country must be our national priority.

- We no longer need a massive army to protect ourselves adequately. We can easily defend North America from attack with far fewer troops than we now have. Our best tool for defending ourselves and changing the world is our economic power.

- The greatest threats facing the United States today are at home: our weak economy, our national debt, our decaying cities, crime, drugs, homelessness, and other long-neglected domestic problems. To remain strong as a nation, we must face them.

Critics say:

- Withdrawing our military forces will make the world dangerously unstable. Pulling our troops out of Europe, the Middle East, and Asia may upset the military balances there and spark wars as aggressive nations move to fill the vacuum. The nations of the world will lose confidence in the United States, and this would in turn harm our economy.

- We will be throwing away our option to use massive military force outside of North America to stand up for democracy or protect our economic interests.

- These policies will probably leave the Soviet Union—a country on the brink of civil war and showing no commitment to democracy—with the world's largest military. We should not slash our military budget as long as the Soviet Union and China continue to maintain such powerful armed forces.

- The Gulf War showed us that economic power has its limits, and that military strength is still a deciding factor in shaping the world. If we sharply cut our military spending, we may be unable to defeat the next Saddam Hussein that crosses us.

Supporters say:

- We are not pulling out of the world altogether, we are only pulling out militarily. As we build our economic strength, we will become more powerful in the world, not less. If the Soviet Union or any other nation wishes to build up its military at the expense of its economy and get its forces tied up around the world, this will only improve our economic position.

- It's time to reap the fruits of our victories in the Cold War and the Gulf War. Now that there are no major military threats facing us or any of our allies, it's time to beat most of our swords into plowshares. Our allies can now easily afford to defend themselves.

- Once we build up our economic strength, we will be in a much better position to help address problems in other countries. If all countries follow our example and slash their military budgets, there will be far less war and suffering overall.

- If we don't address these pressing domestic problems soon, we run the risk that we too will come out losers in the Cold War, with our economy dragging and our cities in decline.

Name: _____

BELIEFS MANY AMERICANS HOLD

Link the beliefs with Futures:

____ We have no right to address international problems, such as war and conflict, on our own. They are everybody's problems, so we must all work together to solve them. The more countries work together, the better the results will be.

____ We must oppose cruel and vicious rulers everywhere. To support them or turn a blind eye toward how they treat their people is wrong. We have the world's most powerful military, and we should not be afraid to use it against these terrible leaders.

____ We must prevent Germany, Japan, and other countries from becoming more powerful than us. We should no longer spend our money to help defend these rich countries, since they are able to defend themselves. We should spend the money instead to work on our own problems.

____ We must be practical when we deal with other countries. We cannot fundamentally change how the world works, and if we tried, we would only make the world more unstable and plunge it into another war. The United States today is number one in the world, so why rock the boat?

Name:_____

GLOSSARY WORKSHEET

Instructions: Match the terms in Column B with the items in Column A.

Column A	Column B
___ Source of much of world's oil	A. alliance
___ U.S. political system	B. arms control agreement
___ Includes $300 billion for defense	C. boycott
___ U.S. wheat in exchange for Mexican oil	D. conflict
___ Most dangerous class of weapons	E. democracy
___ Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty signed by Americans and Soviets	F. developing nations
___ Supported by United States in Afghanistan	G. dictatorship
___ Since World War II, most have taken place in developing countries	H. foreign aid
___ U.S. ban on trade with Cuba	I. human rights
___ Condition of one-eighth of U.S. population	J. international organizations
___ Defense treaty between United States and Japan	K. interdependent
___ United States and other countries applied these to block Iraq's trade	L. Middle East
___ Murder and torture are violations	M. U.S. national budget
___ $3 billion in annual U.S. assistance to Israel	N. U.S. national budget deficit
___ Describes link between Japan, Middle East, and United States	O. nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons
___ Country with enormous global power	P. poverty
___ Totaled $250 billion in 1990	Q. sanctions
___ Jewish-Palestinian problem	R. superpower
___ Iraq's political system	S. trade
___ World Bank and United Nations	T. rebel groups
___ Where three-quarters of the world's people live	U. wars

GLOSSARY

alliance: An agreement among nations, often to protect each other in case of attack. The United States has agreed to help protect Canada, Mexico, Japan, Israel, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, Turkey, Indonesia, most of the countries of Western Europe and Latin America, and many other countries. Of its roughly two million troops, the United States has stationed about a half a million among its allies in the Persian Gulf, Western Europe, Japan, and other parts of the world.

arms control agreements: Agreements in which two or more countries reduce their numbers of weapons or set limits on how many more weapons they can have.

boycott: A refusal to deal with a nation or organization, as a sign of disapproval. One country or group of countries may refuse to buy the products of another country in order to force it to change its policies. The United States boycotts products made in Cuba, Vietnam, Libya, and Iraq and other countries because it opposes their governments.

conflict: A strong, continuing disagreement. Conflicts can be over defining borders between countries, over national independence, over how a country should be run, over competing political beliefs, or they can be racial, ethnic, or religious. Conflicts can become violent, such as those currently between Jews and Palestinians in Israel, or within and among the republics of the Soviet Union. When conflicts turn extremely violent, they can become wars.

democracy: A system in which the citizens of a country control their government by electing representatives. Most allies of the United States are democracies, but some, such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, are not. A number of weak democratic countries have poor human rights records.

developing nations: Most of the countries of Africa, Asia, and South and Central America, including Mexico, China, and Brazil. Since they have little modern industry, their economies are considered "developing." About three-quarters of of the people on earth live in developing countries. Most citizens of these countries are extremely poor. Since 1945, the majority of the world's wars and violent conflicts have occurred in developing nations.

dictatorship: A system in which the citizens have no power and the government is controlled by a leader, or dictator. Dictatorships, such as Iraq, Syria, and Cuba, generally have poor human rights records.

foreign aid: Assistance given by one country to another. Each year the United States spends roughly $10 billion on aid to other countries in weapons, food, farming equipment, and money to strengthen their militaries and improve their economies. Another possible form of aid is for a rich country to forgive the money that a poor country owes it.

human rights: How well a country treats all its citizens. Governments that murder, torture, or abuse some of their citizens, or imprison them without a fair trial, are considered to have poor human rights records. Dictatorships, like Syria and Cuba, generally have poor human rights records, but so do a number of democracies, like Israel, Turkey and the Philippines.

international organizations: Organizations in which nations work together to achieve a common goal. The United Nations promotes peace and provides a forum for countries to discuss and organize action on global issues. The World Bank helps poor countries strengthen their economies. Each year the United States gives roughly $2 billion to help support such organizations.

interdependent: Being dependent upon each other. Two or more countries are interdependent when none of them can meet all their needs on their own, but each has to rely on cooperation from another. For example, Japan is dependent on the Middle East for oil. The Middle East is dependent on the United States for oil drilling equipment. The United States is dependent on Japan for a variety of important high-tech equipment. We are all dependent upon each other not to destroy the environment, since this will inevitably harm the whole world.

Middle East: A region including the countries of southwestern Asia and northeastern Africa. Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Syria, Libya, and Lebanon are some of the countries in the Middle East.

national budget: The money a country plans to spend each year. The U.S. budget is roughly $1.2 trillion, or $1,200 billion. This past year our federal government spent roughly $300 billion on defense, $250 billion on social security, $150 billion on welfare, $150 billion on health and Medicare, $40 billion on education, $30 billion on transportation, $10 billion on foreign aid, and $2 billion on international organizations. Due to years of national budget deficits, the United States also had to pay roughly $250 billion in interest on the three trillion dollars it now owes to banks at home and abroad.

national budget deficit: The amount of money a government owes if it spends more money than it takes in during the year. Last year the U.S. government spent roughly $250 billion more than it had collected (mainly through taxes) by borrowing the money from banks in the United States and abroad. Over the years, this has created an enormous national debt of about $3 trillion ($3,000 billion), making us the largest debtor nation in the world.

nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons: Nuclear weapons are the most powerful weapons ever made, creating massive explosions and long-lasting, deadly after-effects. Biological weapons spread deadly diseases. Chemical weapons poison their victims. In 1988, Iraq's dictator Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons against his Kurdish citizens. Because of their enormous destructive potential, these types of weapons are opposed today by most nations.

poverty: The condition of being poor. Roughly one in every eight Americans live in poverty, and about three million of them are homeless. Germany and Sweden are among the countries that have a lower proportion of citizens living in poverty. Most citizens of the developing nations live in extreme poverty. This causes environmental problems as people cut down trees for firewood and farming, and their governments have less money to fight pollution.

sanctions: A non-military action taken by one or more nations to force another nation to behave in a certain way. Sanctions include boycotts, and refusing to loan money to a country. For example, when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, the United States and other countries imposed strong economic sanctions by stopping Iraq from trading with other countries. The United States has also imposed milder sanctions against the Soviet Union, China, South Africa, Syria, Iran, North Korea, Libya, and other countries.

superpower: A country that is far more economically and militarily powerful than other countries. Because they could stretch their forces around the world, people until recently referred to both the United States and the Soviet Union as superpowers, but some now believe the Soviet Union is no longer in that category. Other countries that are leading powers, but not referred to as superpowers, are China, Japan, Germany, Great Britain, and France.

trade: The act of buying and selling goods. The United States and U.S. businesses trade with most countries of the world, selling food, lumber, weapons, minerals, and other products, and buying oil, automobiles, machinery, and other products. The three leading trading partners of the United States are Canada, Mexico, and Japan. In recent years, Americans have bought more than they have sold, and this has harmed our economy. Many developing nations depend heavily on business with the U.S.

rebel groups: People that have organized to fight to overthrow their country's government. The United States supplies weapons and other aid to rebel groups fighting in Afghanistan and Cambodia.

wars: Large-scale, armed conflicts among countries or groups of people in a country. Unlike the Gulf War, most wars around the world since World War II have been civil wars or wars for independence, and have been fought mostly in developing nations. Afghanistan, Cambodia, and El Salvador are among the nations currently torn by civil wars.

FUTURE GROUPS

U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearings

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Your assignment is to persuade members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate to use your Future as the basis of our country's foreign policy over the next decade. Your presentation will be judged on how well you defend the policies of your Future.

ORGANIZING YOUR GROUP

Each of the four members of your group will take a specific role. Below is a brief explanation of the responsibilities for each role:

1. *Spokesperson:* Your job is to summarize the policies of your Future and explain why they are best for the United States. Review the *Supporters say* section of your Future. In preparing your presentation, you should expect help from your group's military and economic experts. Your presentation should be no more than five minutes.

2. *Cross-Examiner:* Your job is to challenge the positions of the other groups after the spokespersons have completed their presentations. While your spokesperson is developing the presentation for your Future, you should be writing three to six questions to ask each of the other three groups. Your questions should be drawn from the *Critics say* section of the other Futures. In preparing your questions, you should expect help from your group's military and economic experts.

3. *Military Expert:* Your job is to advise the spokesperson and cross-examiner of your group on the military policies of the Futures. Pay special attention to the second paragraph of the *What would we have to do?* section of your Future. Use your textbook and other information sources to find historical evidence to support the policies of your Future. You should also consider recent events, especially the lessons of the Iraq war, the decline of the Soviet Union, and the budget deficit here at home in developing your arguments.

4. *Economics Expert:* Your job is to advise the spokesperson and cross-examiner of your group on the economic policies of the Futures. Pay special attention to the third paragraph of the *What would we have to do?* section of your Future. Use your textbook and other information sources to find historical evidence to support the policies of your Future. You should also consider recent events, especially the economic sanctions that have been imposed on Iraq since August 1990, and economic problems that have emerged in the United States and around the world in recent years.

THE PRESENTATION

Your spokesperson will first present the case for your Future to the Foreign Relations Committee members. Your spokesperson can make use of notes during the presentation but should try to speak clearly and convincingly. After all four of the Future groups have completed their presentations, your cross-examiner should criticize the positions of the other groups in order to point out weaknesses in their arguments. Others will likewise have a chance to criticize your group. Any member of your group may respond to these questions.

FOCUSING YOUR THOUGHTS

I. Ranking the Four Futures

Imagine you are a White House adviser and the President wants your opinion on which Future the United States should follow. Rank the Futures, with "1" being the best Future our country should follow, "2" being the second best policy, etc.

___ **FUTURE ONE: Standing Up for Democracy.** Over the next ten years, we should protect and support democratic countries that respect human rights, even if this means we cannot spend more money at home.

___ **FUTURE TWO: Charting a Stable Course.** Over the next ten years, we should try to make the world a more stable place and the United States more powerful, even if this means we must sometimes support governments that are undemocratic or have poor human rights records.

___ **FUTURE THREE: Cooperating Globally.** Over the next ten years, we should cooperate whenever possible with other countries to address international problems, even if this sometimes means not getting our way.

___ **FUTURE FOUR: Building Our Economic Strength.** Over the next ten years, we should sharply cut our military spending and strengthen our economy, even if this means we will no longer be able to use massive military strength around the world.

II. Beliefs

What do you think of these statements? Rate each of them:

1 = Strongly Support
2 = Support
3 = Oppose
4 = Strongly Oppose
5 = Undecided

___ It is wrong for us to do business with undemocratic governments that have poor human rights records, no matter how important it is for our economy.

___ We will always have to compete with the world's other nations for power.

___ Poverty and war in faraway countries threaten our own future.

___ The greatest threats facing our country are all at home: a weak economy, budget deficits, crime, drugs, poverty, AIDS, and homelessness.

___ We have no right to decide on our own to pressure another country to behave in a certain way.

___ We are number one and we have no need to change our foreign policy.

___ Using our military around the world creates more enemies than friends.

___ How other countries operate is none of our business as long as they don't threaten us.

___ As Americans, we have a responsibility to spread democracy around the world.

___ It is better for us to have a very powerful economy and an adequate military than an adequate economy and a very powerful military.

___ The nations of the world have no right to single out and pressure an individual nation to behave in a certain way.

III. Some Possible Policies for the United States

What do you think of the following possible policies for the United States? Rate each of them:

1 = Strongly Support
2 = Support
3 = Oppose
4 = Strongly Oppose
5 = Undecided

Economic:

___ Use boycotts and sanctions against all countries with poor human rights records.

___ Become far more economically powerful than any other country.

___ Lead a major international effort to improve the economic situation in Eastern Europe and the developing world.

___ Sharply increase aid to Americans living in poverty.

___ Avoid using our economic strength to pressure other countries.

___ Double our foreign aid to poor democratic countries that have good human rights records.

___ Share our technology with other nations to cooperate on common problems, such as pollution.

___ Do business with all interested countries, regardless of their kind of government.

Military:

___ Pledge to defend all weak countries against their aggressive neighbors.

___ Agree to use our troops outside of North America only if other leading nations support us in advance.

___ Remain the world's strongest military power, keeping our troops stationed around the world.

___ Pledge to defend undemocratic countries that have oil or other materials our country needs.

___ Encourage arms control agreements.

___ Sharply cut our military spending.

___ Supply arms to our friends to keep our enemies in check.

___ Organize a permanent, international military force to intervene in conflicts in place of U.S. troops.

___ Remove our troops from outside of North America.

___ Stop selling arms to developing nations.

Name:_____

EVALUATION FORM

U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Members

What was the most persuasive argument presented in favor of this Future?

What was the most persuasive criticism presented against this Future?

Future One

Future One

Future Two

Future Two

Future Three

Future Three

Future Four

Future Four

Which group presented its Future most effectively? Explain your answer.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Members

YOUR ROLE

You are a member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate. Your committee oversees the foreign policy of our country. In the past few years, many of our long-standing assumptions about the world have changed. The U.S. role in the world must keep up with those changes. In this exercise, you will hear four different views on the future direction of our country's foreign policy.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

You must decide which of the four groups presents its Future most effectively. While the Future groups organize their presentations, you should prepare questions about the Futures. After the Future groups give their presentations, you will have an opportunity to ask questions during a cross-examination period. You should prepare two questions for each of the Futures. Your questions should be challenging and critical. For example, a good question for Future One might be:

> *Wouldn't Future One put us in conflict with some of our most important economic and military allies, such as Saudi Arabia?*

Examine the *Critics say* section under each of the four Futures for ideas in developing questions. You may work on your questions with another member of the Foreign Relations Committee. Your teacher will collect the questions at the end of the exercise.

After the presentations and cross-examination are completed, you should complete the Foreign Relations Committee Member Evaluation Form as homework. The following day, you will be called upon to explain your evaluation of the Future groups.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE UNITED STATES SHOULD DO?

Crafting a Future Five

You have now considered four possible Futures for the United States in the next ten years. You may particularly like one, you may like some of the points in all of them, or you may not like any. Here is your chance to choose what role you think the United States should play in the world in the years ahead. Your assignment is to craft a fifth Future of your own that explains what *you* think the United States should do in the next ten years.

What are your strongest beliefs about our future?

You should first consider your important beliefs about the United States and the problems facing us. Look over the beliefs listed on the *Focusing Your Thoughts* worksheet. Which beliefs do you strongly support or oppose? Were there any opinions raised in class that you strongly support or oppose? What other beliefs do you feel strongly about?

What policies would you like to see the United States pursue?

Now consider some of the policies you think the United States should achieve in the next ten years. Look over the policies listed on the *Focusing Your Thoughts* worksheet. Do you strongly support or oppose any of them? Were there any other policies you heard in class that you strongly support or oppose? Consider the "policies" section of the worksheet. Which ones do you strongly support or oppose? Can you think of anything else that you would like to see the United States do in the next ten years?

Now you can construct your own Future for the year 2001. As you do this, remember:

- *Take everything you think is important into account.* If you think protecting the environment or making the world more stable is important, your Future Five should explain how the United States would accomplish it.

- *Address the major threats you see facing the United States.* If you feel that there are major threats facing our country, you must take them into account. For example, if you feel that undemocratic countries threaten the United States, you must explain in your Future how you would deal with them.

- *Be careful of contradictions.* Some policies contradict others. We cannot sharply cut our military spending and remain the world's largest military power at the same time. We cannot provide aid to a country and boycott its products at the same time. Policies also need to be consistent with beliefs. It would not make sense to maintain all of our current alliances if we believe that we should refuse to ally with undemocratic governments.

- *Everything has its price.* Remember that big projects cost big money. You must consider the economic cost of your Future. For example, if you want the United States to have the world's strongest military and to try to end poverty in the United States and around the world, this will be very expensive. Would we pay for this Future by raising taxes or borrowing more money from other countries?

Finally, bear in mind that no Future you create will be perfect. Any important set of policies for the United States will have both supporters and critics. How would they respond to your Future? How would you answer your critics?

Good luck!

Name: _____

MY FUTURE FIVE

Important beliefs about the United States and the problems facing us:

What the United States should do in the next ten years:

How would you handle the costs of this Future?

Critics say:

A.

B.

Supporters say:

A.

B.

THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES IN A CHANGING WORLD

A Curriculum Unit on Foreign Policy Choices

Follow-up Form

Please take a few moments to report on your use of this curriculum unit.

Date(s) used: Course in which you used it:

Grade and level of students:

Number of Students:

Did you use the lesson plans as they appear in the material or did you alter them? If so, how? What worked and what was less than perfect?

Were your students able to "try on" other perspectives?

Did your students find any of the Futures especially appealing or unappealing? Why?

One of the goals of this unit is to encourage students to become more attentive to public policy issues. Do you have any evidence that this happened?

Other comments:

NAME_____ SCHOOL_____

ADDRESS_____CITY_____STATE____ZIP____

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS MATERIAL?_____

Please return this form to: *Choices Education Project*
Center for Foreign Policy Development
Box 1948, Brown University
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